

## and here i'm trying not to bite your neck by piggy09

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**Summary:**

You're so hungry.

## and here i'm trying not to bite your neck

### Author's Note:

[warning: body horror]

So I had this idea, partway through watching this series, about the monster. Canon went on to disprove that idea but I love it anyways! So here we are.

You are going to be brave. This is a story where people are brave, and you are not the hero but you can be brave enough to fit the story. Mike is the hero of the story, and you are – a weapon. Mike's weapon, maybe, if he would ask you to. If he wouldn't.

He won't, ever. You're going to make sure of that, because you're going to be brave. Your monster is screaming up against the wall and you reach out to the pieces of it and break them, over and over and over, until you don't have a monster anymore. Until the monster is all confetti-flakes around you, a tornado, and everything hurts and it's all going to be over soon,

and

the dust settles. The world is blue, and hurting around the edges. You can feel the world's heartbeat between your temples. You are: upside-down.

In front of you is a little girl with a tattoo on the inside of her arm. It says: *010*.

Your head hurts.

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You try so hard to get back to Mike and the others. You reach for the edges of the world and try to pull yourself through; you run around

the school looking for doors. There aren't any. Ten follows you the whole time, eyes wide and curious. *No*, she says, and: *no*.

*Shut up*, you tell her. *Mouthbreather*.

*Mouth...breather?*

*Bad*, you say. *Bad person. Stupid person. I need – back.*

*No*, says Ten again. She steps in front of you. Her hair is shaved all the way down, like you, and she looks very tired. Like you. She says: *Stay. Wait. Become.*

*No*, you say, only you're yelling. Your whole brain is sore but you try to find the threads that connect to Ten anyways – except you can't find them, because they're gone. All the threads are gone. The world is very quiet and you – can't – move – it.

So you punch Ten instead, in the face. And you run.

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In Mike's house you yell *Mike* over and over and over again but no one answers. No one comes for you. He *promised*, that you would go to the Snowball, that you would be his not-sister. If you just wait long enough he'll come back. So you crawl into your fort in his basement and hug your knees to your chest and wait.

Footsteps. Mike? Ten.

*Ow*, she says, and crawls into the blanket fort next to you. Her shoulder presses against your shoulder. You can feel her skin through her hospital gown. It should be warm. It's not.

*Get out*, you tell her.

*Wait*, she says. *Listen*.

You let out a breath through your nose, and listen.

*You can't – run*, she says slowly. *Tried. Ran. Got tired. Got hungry.* She stops talking. She scrubs her hands against her hair. *Nine says he tried*

*too.*

Your head shoots up. *Nine*, you say.

*Gone*, Ten says, and doesn't say anything else.

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Eventually you stop trying to make Ten go away. The two of you hold hands as you walk through town. You try to tell her all about the town, but you don't really know enough to make a story. So eventually you go back to Mike's. There is cereal in the cupboard; you eat that. (Ten says she isn't hungry.) You try to tell her about Mike. He's kind, you say. He worked so hard to save his friend. If he knew we were here he would help us too.

You believe it.

Mostly.

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You eat all the cereal. You eat all the chips. You eat everything that isn't rotted. You and Ten go to the grocery store and you eat everything that isn't rotted there too. You're so hungry. You miss waffles. Your cheeks hurt, and your jaw, and your back, and you miss waffles, and you miss Mike.

Ten keeps looking at you out of the corner of her eye sometimes. Like she's scared of you. You told her you're sorry, but she just shook her head and didn't say anything. The two of you sleep in the blanket fort in the basement and you listen for her heartbeat and you don't hear one and there is something very wrong, because there was a monster and then there was Ten and Ten is just like you.

*Psst*, you tell her in the dark. Ten opens her eyes.

*Nine is gone*, you say, and Ten nods.

*Eight?* you say.

...*Nine*, Ten says slowly.

*Seven?* you say.

*Eight*, Ten says, and her eyes are very sad.

*Six?*

*Seven.*

*Five?*

*Six.*

*Four?*

*Five.*

You stop. *Nine?* you say, voice very small.

Ten grins with a mouthful of sharp little teeth. *Me*, she says. *Me*.

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You break all sorts of things in the basement but it doesn't fix anything. They just stay broken, and then you feel bad.

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You've been down there for a while when you hear footsteps on the stairs. "Mike," you say. "Mike!"

There isn't an answer.

*"Mike!"*

You can hear his voice, and the voices of the others. They aren't talking about you. They're talking about school, and Will-who-is-back-now, and no one says *shut up, you guys, I think I hear Eleven*.

"Mike!" you scream at the top of your lungs, but no one answers.

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You're so hungry.

Your head hurts.

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You find Will's house, and you find Will. You can hear Will like all the others. You can feel him, too, like a heartbeat. You follow him into his bedroom and whisper: "Will."

"Who's there?!" he says.

You sob. You whisper: "Eleven."

"You're – you're that girl," Will says. "The one with the superpowers. Where – are you?"

"Upside-down," you say urgently. "Will? I'm hungry."

You are. You are so hungry. You can't remember the last time you ate. Will says "hold on" and runs out of his bedroom – you can hear him – and then runs back.

"I brought leftovers," he says. "Enough for you, if you want."

"I can't," you whisper. Can't what? Can't see the food. Can't see Will. Can't eat that food, you can feel it, you can't. What you can also feel: Will, the heartbeat in him. The blood in him. You can feel all those things, like he's a part of you.

"Don't go," you tell him.

"I can call Mike and the others," he says, voice echoing. "We can help you. We can get you out of there."

No. It's very important to you, for some reason, that Mike not know you're this hungry. You want Eggos. You want to try pudding. You want Will to be just a little closer, so you can reach him.

"No," you whisper. "Stay."

"Okay," says Will, and does.

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It takes you a few days to realize Ten is gone. You can't find her. You wonder if that's what happened to Nine. Maybe he ran away somewhere, and Ten ran after him. Maybe all ten of them are living together somewhere, happy, and if you can just find them—

If you can—

If you can just find them then you can—

your head hurts

--

You stop going to Mike's basement. You sit in Will's bedroom and try to make the lights flicker but you can't. You can't reach through to the other side anymore; it makes your head hurt, like it's gonna split open. You can't move things. You can't talk to anyone except Will, and you don't know why, except it feels like he's you. Like an arm. Like you could move *him*, only you don't.

Will plays you his mixtape and it comes through distorted and strange. *Since you've been gone I've been – I dream at – I can only see – I feel so cold and I long for your embrace – I keep crying baby, baby, please I keep crying baby, baby, I keep please I keep—*

"Stop," you tell him. The tape stops. You can hear Will's breathing. In – out. Your own breath goes in and out, mostly, except when it rattles and you cough. Sometimes Will also coughs, and things splatter. You don't ask. Will doesn't ask you all sorts of things. Maybe that's what the upside-down teaches you: that there are questions you should never ever ask, or someone will answer them.

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"Eleven," Will says, and stops. "The gate might still be open. You can come back. The monster's gone, right? You beat it."

You don't say anything. Your voice sounds strange when it comes out of your mouth. you're hoarse, because you're coughing all the time and you can't stop.

"Eleven?" says Will.

“Yeah,” you say, only the syllable stretches too long and it rattles . Will makes a shocked little sound, and you would too, only you can’t. it’s very important that you cover your mouth with your hands. You know that sound. will knows that sound too.

“Will,” you say, voice burning around the edges, “my head hurts.”

“You killed the monster, right?” Will says . “Right?”

You try to say *yeah* but your voice rattles instead.

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You’re getting taller, be cause you’re growing. Your nails are getting longer, because you aren’t cut ting them. You’re so hungry your head hurts. Your head hurts Your head hurts your head hurts you’re so hungry you want eggos you want to try pudding you want Mike you want mike you want mike you want Mike

--

“Will,” you whisper, and Will doesn’t say anything. You can hear

him breathing through the wall between you. The place in your brain that you used to move things with is waking up is humming is saying that the wall could be br o k e n if you pushed it r i g h t if you just pushed right

through it

and Will leaves the room and you follow him You’re so tall now but that’s because you’re growing, you’re growing up, four five six seven eight nine ten eleven twelve.

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You lose Will in the town and you’re screaming You’re screaming because you need will to lead you to mike because you need Mike because Mike will fix it and you’ll go to the Snowball and everything will be okay and Mike, mike, I’m hungry. I’m so hungry Mike. Aren’t you going to fix it ? aren’t you going to m a k e it



better?

--

you're so

hungry

--

will didn't go to the woods but will's fort is in the woods so you go there anyways And there is ten, there is Ten, asleep in a fort in the woods She wakes up when you get there and your mouth o p e n s and your mouth opens

and it keeps opening

and it feels good, like stretching,

like it was i n you the whole time.

You try to tell her *I get it now* but instead you just scream. Ten screams back an d she tries to run ,which is silly because she always knew

just what you were

becoming.

What happened to Nine, Ten? What happened to nine? what happened to nine, ten? what happened to nine

?

--

the town is blue and soft under your feet, soft and sticky and easy and it's y our s the whole world, it was made just for you, its heart beating through you and the space in your head where you could

pushrightthrough if you wanted to. Here is the house where Mike lives. here is the basement. here are the voices:

“What do you mean you’ve been talking to Eleven?”

“Mike, you’re not *listening*. It’s not her. It’s—”

“Is she okay?”

“Seriously, Will, the *whole* time? And you didn’t tell *any* of us?”

“You guys! She’s *coming*.”

one of those voice s is Mike’s voice and you want it, you want Mike you want him to tell you that it will be o kay and you’re going to the snowball

together. just the two of you dancing and mike giving you the food that you want so you aren’t hungry. ten made you stop being hungry

but you’re going to be hungry again soon, you can feel it, you can tell you can know you can feel it where your heart used to be. just hunger now. you’re so hungry, Mike. if you could just tell him, he would fix it,you know he would fix it , mike is going to fix it,

You can feel him and Will right there on the other side of the wall,

if you just

push.

you can hear them screaming and you scream back as you reach out the part of your brain you used to use to push people and you push the wall between you so you can get to Mike and mike can fix it you push and you manage to get through, all of you, and you can’t see Mike but you can smell him and you can taste him in the air and you try telling him *mike it’s me it’s*

*me it’s*

but he doesn’t understand and everyone is yelling, and they are yelling *monster*,

and you realize  
suddenly  
that the monster is you.

**Author's Note:**

Baby I need a friend  
but I'm a vampire smile, you'll meet a sticky end  
and here I'm trying not to bite your neck  
but it's beautiful and I'm gonna get

so drunk on you and kill your friends

Baby you need to leave  
and I know you know  
that's why you keep ignoring me  
because if you don't  
gonna run me down, let myself go  
--"Vampire Smile," Kyla La Grange

Thanks for reading! Please kudos + comment if you  
enjoyed! :)